

**Building a Responsive Community  
Transportation Forum  
NHC Senior Center  
July 26, 2005  
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM**

The New Hanover County Senior Center was the site for the Building A Responsive Transportation Community Transportation Forum July 26, 2005. Annette Crumpton, Director of the New Hanover County Department of Aging, opened the forum with an overview of the Building a Responsive Community Committee's (BRACC) work over the past year and a half. She stated the Committee plans to host a community forum twice a year. The topic of the February Forum will be announced at a later date. Annette turned the forum over to Chris May, Director of the Cape Fear Council of Governments, who acted as facilitator for the event. Warren Lee, NHC Emergency Management Director, recorded the audience's comments.

Chris May suggested the group/audience identify challenges and possible solutions as a guide for the session.

Albert Eby, Director of WAVE Transit, presented information about WAVE Transit and the new Authority. He introduced Arlanda Rouse, WAVE Transit Assistant Director, and Lamont Jackson from First Transit. Arlanda and Lamont work with the paratransit division of WAVE Transit.

**Challenges:**

1. Safety of the bus stops. This includes access to the bus stop.
2. Identify need for increased routes into unserved areas.
3. Accommodate special needs of riders (example asthma, mobility issues etc).
4. Increased visibility and availability of route schedules. The schedules are not available throughout the county.
5. The public is required to cross busy streets to access a bus.
6. Shelters are not present at all bus stops.
7. Poor lighting at some bus stops.
8. Concern for passenger safety at some stops.
9. Drivers are not securing wheelchairs properly.
10. Use of cell phones on vans and buses a concern to passengers. Passengers feel the cell phones are distracting to drivers.
11. Communications between dispatchers and drivers and riders needs improvement. This is primarily a paratransit concern.

**Opportunities:**

1. Conduct a survey of bus stops to determine improvements. Seek funding sources to make repairs/improvements.
2. Work with WAVE Transit's Route Committee to identify changes/expansion to existing routes.
3. Add routes in unserved areas and shorten wait time.

4. Seek assistance and funding from benefiting agencies when a companion/rider is needed to assist persons with mobility needs.
5. Route Committee should distribute fixed route schedules to grocery stores and all human service agencies.
6. Encourage the public to provide information to the Route Committee. Inform the public that there is a Route Committee.
7. Provide additional shelters
9. Consider solar-powered lighting at shelters.
9. Provide additional/extra shelters in the medical center 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> Street area.
10. Provide additional training for drivers on securing wheelchairs. 11. Include users of public transportation on the Transportation Advisory Board.
11. Riders need and request help getting on and off the vans.
12. Provide opportunities for shopping. This is a request for paratransit riders.

### **Important Telephone Numbers for WAVE Transit:**

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| • Albert Eby, Director, WAVE Transit                  | 202-2038 |
| • Arlanda Rouse, Assistant Director, WAVE Transit     | 202-2051 |
| • Lamont Jackson, Manager First Transit               | 202-2052 |
| • Maureen McCarthy, Board Member, Marketing Committee | 763-1787 |

A survey was completed by each member of the audience as he/she entered the Senior Center. The results of the survey are as follows:

### **Survey results:**

1. **Which type/division of WAVE Transit do you use?**
  - 25 persons use the fixed route buses
  - 37 persons use the paratransit vans
  - 8 persons use both the fixed route buses and paratransit vans
2. **What are your destination/types of trips?**
  - 57 use WAVE for medical transportation
  - 9 use WAVE for employment
  - 18 use WAVE for nutrition site transportation
  - 52 use WAVE for shopping
  - 23 use WAVE for recreation
  - 15 use WAVE for other ( school and not specific)
3. **Why WAVE does not meet my transportation needs?**
  - More funding to help folks pay for transportation
  - Vans late or never show up and then client has to find other transportation
  - Transportation needed to beaches, Castle Hayne, Gordon Road areas
  - Need transportation to drugstore to pick up Rx meds.
  - Need Dial a Ride Transportation
  - Add more routes

- Schedules are not accommodating to individuals schedule
- Route times are unknown.

4/5. **What changes/improvements do you suggest?**

- Better dispatcher communication
- Establish a new transfer facility so folks do not stand on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street
- More medical and shopping transportation
- More fixed routes (Sunset South and Adams Street, Gordon Rd/Ogden area)
- Provide assistance on and off the van
- Fixed routes to senior housing communities so residents can be independent in meeting their transportation needs.
- Safety issues with bus stops and busy streets
- Trips are too long (paratransit) Trips take too long when transfers to a second bus are needed.

6. **Age of passengers:**

- 46 people were over 60 years of age
- 9 people were under 60 years of age